

REMARKS

Applicants have made minor revisions to correct the Examiner's proposed amendment to Claim 6 in conformance with Applicants' understanding of the Examiner's Amendment. Applicants have corrected typographical errors and have deleted the second occurrence of the step of "mounting the sample on a sample stage" from the Examiner's proposed amendment. Applicants submit that Claim 6, as amended, conforms with the Examiner's verbal description thereof during the telephone conference of October 21, 2003.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all claims now pending (1) are in proper form, (2) are neither obvious nor anticipated by the relied upon art of record, and (3) are in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited at the earliest possible date. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would be useful in moving the application forward to allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at (310) 207-3800.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2666 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17, particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR, & ZAFMAN LLP

Dated: October 27, 2003

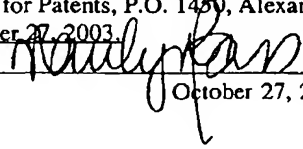
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By: 

Joseph Lutz, Reg. No. 43,765

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail with sufficient postage in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop AF, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on October 27, 2003.


Marilyn Bass

October 27, 2003